

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Kornakov during a telephone conversation on February 8 are gratefully appreciated. Applicants thank Examiner Kornakov for his time. The reasons presented during the conversation as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)/§ 102(e) over Bush et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,461,442; hereinafter *Bush*). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Specifically, *Bush* fails to disclose or suggest a process that includes at least flowing the solvent away from a drum to carry away coating material removed from the inside surface and the outside surface of the first end of the drum, wherein an inner sponge section of a sponge material has formed internal channels for flowing the solvent away from the drum and an outer sponge section of said sponge material has formed internal channels for flowing the solvent away from the drum, as recited in independent claim 1.

In contrast, *Bush* discloses a process for removing a strip of coating material from a first end of a drum by using a foam material to simultaneously wipe both the inside surface and the outside surface of the first end of the drum (*Bush*, abstract). *Bush*'s foam material contains shallow drain grooves 76 that flows cleaning solvent away from the drum (*Bush*, col. 6, ll. 39-44). Although *Bush* mentions that the foam material may include multiple sections, and internal channeling is mentioned as a possibility (*Bush*, col. 11, ll. 35-40), *Bush* fails to disclose on which sections of the foam material to form the possible internal channels. Instead, *Bush* explicitly teaches that shallow drain grooves 76 are formed on the upper surface 70 of the foam material (*Bush* Figs. 4 and 5; col. 7, ll. 37-54). Moreover, although *Bush* suggests that the foam material includes open cell pores as asserted in the Advisory Action,

Bush fails to disclose a process that includes at least flowing the solvent away from a drum to carry away coating material removed from the inside surface and the outside surface of the first end of the drum, wherein an inner sponge section of a sponge material has formed internal channels for flowing the solvent away from the drum and an outer sponge section of said sponge material has formed internal channels for flowing the solvent away from the drum, as recited in independent claim 1.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 1, and its dependent claims, are patentable over *Bush*. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)/§ 102(e) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-11 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:JCL

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